FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

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COMMERCIALISM.

It is, as I understand it, a theory of capitalist gain, an increase inherent in wealth. It began when the trader perceived that by a system of sharp practice he could live without labor, without producing anything himself. He could eke out a profit from others' labor. The non-producer is a product of commercialism. The invention of money—a medium of exchange—greatly facilitated the process. Then exchange gave place to buying and selling. Then government came to protect the traders: assumed the right to regulate this medium of exchange, established a monetary value or standard of value. Thus, all wealth being measured, all exchange was effected by means of money. By making gold and silver the basis of money, a certain class was enabled to monopolize wealth by getting a "corner" on these precious metals.

Government began by usurping power. Commercialism began by usurping wealth. Policy soon determined the governor to make a partner of the trader, and a "brotherhood of thieves" was the result. The chief and piratical crew have traveled down the ages and robbery and tribute have become respectable as revenue and taxation.

The State's officer has laid aside his blunderbuss and war club, and is now armed with a paper warrant from the State. The average citizen, while he would hang the highwayman, feels it an honor to be robbed by the State's officer. Is he not a citizen? Can he not decide or help to decide who shall govern the land? He is flattered into the belief that he is really one of the men who compose the government. The State's officer is the man he has chosen to execute the laws. The man he has chosen for a leader, and the old loyalty to his sovereign still lingers in his organization. The old fealty that made him regard his service to his lord and master as a sacred duty, is still seen in his obeisance to his political ringmaster.

But the leaver of liberty is working. Each rising generation is taking a step in advance. Revolt and rebellion is gradually advancing the masses on to the "glory crowned heights" of independence. Self is asserting its supremacy. A thousand rebels exist today where one stood fifty years ago. The march of independence is on and with an ever increasing ratio. The rule of man over man is questioned as never before. Everywhere we see the independent mind throwing off allegiance to government, to religious creeds, to despotic customs, to fashion's sway. Our brother men and sister women vie with each other in their struggle for freedom. Even children are throwing off the yoke of parental authority. Our gospel friends and political adherents are taking the alarm, but their words of warning and the awful consequences they predict in leaving the beaten paths of peace and virtue are alike ignored, and although some lives are wrecked, the spirit of liberty is marching on and the words of Shelley are shown to be "true and righteous altogether":

> "Obedience,
> Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth,
> Makes slaves of men, and of the human frame
> A mechanized automaton."

Commercialism and government have grown together like Siamese twins; the life of each is essential to the other, and the death of one must entail the death of the other. Our political economists have no use for government other than to protect the rights and insure the interests of capital, that is to say, encourage the increase inherent in wealth, which enables a few to live upon the labors of the many. I know our "commercial Anarchists" have a different conception of capital. They would prevent this increase by making competition free, which, they claim, would reduce all price to cost, and tend to establish reciprocal relations and labor enjoy the entire fruits of its toil. I have labored in this field myself and rejoiced in solving the problem by the rules of our teacher. But some factors in human nature bothered me. I could see how competition would force down price if it could be made free. That is to say, if men would not combine to defeat it. Now competition is a war, a struggle for supremacy in trade; it results in combination and monopoly or else it dies. It is a force, and it is the nature of force to defend itself, or be converted into another form. But perhaps the greatest obstacle we encounter in this line of thought, is the seeming necessity of things that so long have existed. Proudhon tells of a Parisian in the 17th century who nearly died with laughter when told that Venice was governed without a king. But government has evolved on democratic lines. We are beginning to see that "that government is best that governs least." And this logic has produced the Anarchist, who would abolish government altogether. But while the evil of government is more apparent, and reform is loudly demanded, the evils of commercialism are increasing. "Business" and business methods are extolled. In politics the candidate finds his greatest advertisement in the fact that his policy will advance the "business interests" of the community. Even Anarchists are deceived by this popular cry, and that natural right and natural justice, and natural law which humanity recognizes as existing between man and man is ignored, because forthwith "it is not business." Our ideas of right and justice have no place in the policy of government and still it is more apparent there than in the policy of "business."

If "patriotism" takes us from our homes and bleaches our bones on foreign shores, it is nothing compared to the slow process of starvation "business" inflicts upon us at home. If government is bad, business is worse.

A. L. BALLOU.

East Elma, N. Y.

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ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

VI.

ST. LOUIS TO SPAULDING.

Of all the large cities I have visited, I have the poorest opinion of St. Louis. This is not the fault of the comrades there; for I was nowhere better treated than there. Our cause can boast some grand men and women in St. Louis. Among these are Carl Nold, 110 S. 16th St., and Stella Campbell, 2738 Walnut St., splendid, sincere workers, and with delightful personalities. In all my relations with the comrades, my recollections are most pleasant. But the city itself reminds me of a vast sewer. Its streets are incomparably dirty; and the same may be said of its water, its politics, its government, and its morals. Its present mayor, one Ziegenheim, is one of the most perfect combinations of hyena and ass that ever graced or disgraced a responsible position. His antics with regard to city lighting have caused him to be dubbed "the one-candle power mayor," a title that will cling to him as long as he lives.

Speaking of the city lighting, about the time I reached St. Louis, a crooked City Hall combine were holding up the people by refusing to take action as to providing lights for public places and institutions. At last, the patience of the citizens gave out. An immense crowd marched on City Hall with a demand for immediate action. As they were not Anarchists or workingmen, but included an ex-governor and many other "eminent citizens," they were not met with Gatling guns, but with hurried promises of submission. The terrified delegates saw that the citizens meant business, and lost no time in doing what was required of them. For all that, St. Louis remains the worst lighted large city I have yet seen. It must mend its ways, literally as well as figuratively, if it expects to entertain World's Fair visitors in 1903.

I saw more evidences of prostitution in St. Louis than I have ever witnessed elsewhere. It is not confined to one or two sections, but spread broadcast over the city. The prostitutes here are to an unusual degree in league with thieves and murderers; and to enter a St. Louis brothel is to place both purse and person at unusual hazard.

Crimes of the roughest sort are so prevalent in St. Louis that at times a veritable reign of terror prevails. Hold-ups are so common that there is a general timidity about venturing far after dark. Although the police force is large and well paid, it is so notoriously incompetent that the chief of police offered $100 to every person who would kill a robber in the act.

But enough of the faults of St. Louis. They are simply, on a somewhat larger and coarser scale than in many other places, the same evils that exist everywhere under law-enshrined robbery and oppression. Under a free society, every one of these would disappear so quickly that the place thereof would evermore seek it in vain.

A pleasant surprise awaited me in St. Louis, in the form of a dearly loved Massachusetts comrade. Noting the announcement of a butterfly exhibition in a store window I stepped inside, and found William D. Denton of Wellesley, Mass., one of the dearest boys and truest radicals on earth. The remarkable method of mounting butterflies, which has bronght distinction to his brother and himself in scientific circles, made the exhibition under his charge one of surpassing interest, intensified by the beauty and rarity of many of the specimens. Will lost his temper one morning, while in St. Louis. I dropped in, and found him in a swearing mood—a rare thing for him, as the sweetness of his temper is proverbial. The cause lay in the misconduct of a fool reporter. The night before, Will gave a lecture on "Adaptation and Mimicry in Butterflies," or something of the sort. Now as he has no use for religious slush of any sort, his feelings can be imagined when the next morning's paper came out with an account of how the lecturer had shown the existence and beneficence of an all-wise Creator—the very opposite of what he actually did say.

I had a chance to look into Osteopathy a little, while in St. Louis, and was very favorably impressed both with its theory and its results. Medicine is far from being an exact science; and new ideas with regard to the prevention and cure of diseases are always worth investigating. Dr. J. O. Hotten and Ella Slater, 413 Odd Fellows' Building, practioners in this line, are both earnest radicals.

My lectures in St. Louis were mainly delivered before labor organizations. The trades-union movement is strong here, and in fairly good condition. Although conservatism prevails for the most part, progressive ideas are not unwelcome. I was especially glad of being accorded the privilege of addressing the Central Trades and Labor Assembly, composed of delegates from all the unions. No man is allowed to sit here unless he is an actual, bona fide wage-worker; and politics is strictly barred.

During my stay in St. Louis, a noted evangelist, the Rev. Thomas Harrison was holding union revival services in one of the Methodist churches. It was there that he delivered himself of the gross insult to the working classes, which the readers of Free Society will remember. I commented on this in all my lectures, pointing out its significance. My letter to the preacher who eulogized Harrison has not been answered. I did not expect it to be. Such men dare not face an honest discussion. The pulpit is a comfortable shelter for a moral coward.

Midway in my St. Louis visit, I was called to give three lectures to the coal miners in Spaulding and Riverton, Ill., toward which I accordingly turned after several meetings in the larger city.

JAMES F. MORTON, JR.

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THE PARIS CONGRESS.

After having read "Observations and Suggestions" by Emma Goldman in a recent issue of Free Society, I am more than ever convinced that something should be done immediately to promote this undertaking. When Comrade Goldman was in Chicago on her recent continental tour through this country, she made some personal observations to the writer regarding the efficient propaganda that would result from the Paris congress, and acting on her suggestions and the welfare of the movement in general, I desire to offer some suggestions which I hope will meet with the approval of the comrades and will help to enlist our combined efforts to secure the means of sending a delegate from this country to Paris.

In the first place, I do not think it prudent to dwell upon the relative merits of our comrades, and their individual fitness to be the representative of our ideas and our movement; but I believe it is practical for us to secure some idea of the individual interests of those whom we may suggest as persons to go to Paris. There are many considerations to be taken into account besides those of meritorious conduct, such for instance as the ready ability of some one to go as soon as the funds are provided, and, indeed, there is no time to waste. There are many persons whom we might suggest, but the question arises as to whether the trip will result to the detriment of their own personal interests at home, and we might keep on suggesting from now until next September, without having arrived at definite action.

Of course, it is our desire to send an American if possible, and one who is thoroughly familiar with the philosophy and criticism of Anarchism; and, in consideration of the early date of this suggestion, I would ask through the columns of this paper, if Voltairine de Cleyre would be in a position to make the trip when the necessary funds are provided. Of course, I do not know what her personal interests are; but a propagandist of her excellent ability, as she has attested in the past, would indeed be a fitting representative. Furthermore, she is more or less familiar with the French langnage, and if her individualistic tendencies will allow her to forego her probable domestic interests, an effort will be made at once by the Chicago comrades to raise the necessary funds. A meeting is to be called on Decoration Day, and we will do our utmost in behalf of this effort.

Comrade Goldman's remarks relative to "parlor Anarchists" is quite appropriate, only I disagree with her on the basis that they are not Anarchists at all. I cannot conceive of an Anarchist who is afraid of being called one; but it is manifestly true that never in the history of the Chicago Anarchist movement has it been so utterly devoid of life as it is at the present time. Here we are filling the columns of our propaganda sheets with senseless articles regarding the efficiency of politics or with technical definitions of dialectical abstractions, while labor riots are constantly taking place, and "Bryanism" and "Free Silver" is being crammed into the heads of our ignorant working class.

At present there are nearly 30,000 workmen roaming idly about the streets, standing true to their trade unionist principles, and the country is threatened with one of the greatest strikes it has ever seen. And what preparations are the Anarchists making to gain some vantage ground in the minds of the people who will compose this great upheaval? None whatever; indeed, I have not seen one effort put forth toward agitation along our lines of thought.

Now, comrades, let us get together. Let us hold our ideal preeminent and superlative to all other considerations. Let us not look for inspiration from each other, but find the fire within our own being to arouse the sympathies and minds of those about us. Are we ever going to accomplish anything while we sit with our hands idly folded, gazing blandly at the prostitution of our own power of resistance?

We need not look to find a Kropotkin in others; let us seek for a Kropotkin within ourselves. We love our ideal; let us fight for it, and come what may, discountenancing every personal interest, stand forth before our suffering humanity and expound our principles of freedom and the coming social revolution.

To my mind it should be the hope of every Anarchist that the Paris congress be a great success; that it be well attended, and that we demonstrate to the parliamentarians of 1896 that we are more than alive; that we have the creative thought within us. Let Paris witness one of the greatest assemblies that has yet congregated on its soil, and may the power of those voices which will echo in our congress re-echo throughout the world until their reverberations shall have penetrated every thinking mind, and cause the quick downfall of an already crumbling society which will strew the site of Paris once more with the decayed bones of a merciless, unjust and inhuman civilization.

Comrades, to work! Let us be active!

Chicago, April 26, 1900. GEO. B. BROOKS.

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DEMAND AND SUPPLY.

Large manufacturers compute the demands made upon them in their line in their own countries and the balance is shipped to foreign markets. The totality of such demands is called in national economy "local consumption."

Here the question arises: Are these demands the expression of the real wants of the whole people? Not at all! The poor workers, the large number of proletaires, who have no money and possess nothing but their continual exploited labor force, do not enter the manufacturers' computations, nor that of the retailers. Those that have no money must put up with the crumbs that fall from the tables of the surfeited; that's all.

There is a vast difference and a still vaster discord between the demands and the actual wants of a country. The demands do not even comprise one third part of the actual wants. The majority of the people of those so-called rich countries—so-called because they export more than ninety per cent of their products and manufactures—are poor. England supplies half the world with her wares; at the same time her own workers have hardly enough to cover their nakedness. Russia and Rumania send grain into other countries, so does America. In Russia the farmers were in a tumult because they lacked bread, and in Rumania thousands suffer hunger, especially at present. In America there is also much suffering.

It is an anomaly that the farmers and factory slaves—the very ones who perform the hardest labor—are starving. It is not the one who works, but the one who has the money, that is the one who acquired it by defrauding the toiler of it, that enjoys life under present social conditions.

If for instance the statement is made that Vienna's demands in hats amounts to 90,000 during a season, it means that consumption amounts to that, but our national economists claim it also to imply the supply of actual wants. That is a gross error. It only means a part of the people's real wants and a very small part at that. The thousands who want or need hats and are too poor to purchase and can therefore make no demand for them, are not counted, yet they compose the majority of the people.

In considering the direct products of the soil, things are still worse. The products of the soil depend upon natural forces on which human beings can have but little influence. Thus in that pursuit one depends on the elements and they are cruel at times. An "irregular" year, unfavorable weather, hail, etc., may destroy the crops and crush the hopes and ambitions of honest and meritorious people. In "normal" years, accordiing to statistics, the demand for wheat in Europe, with the exception of Russia, Rumania, and the Balcan Peninsula, is 182,000,000 of hectoliters larger than production. The shortage must therefore be filled by purchases from the last named countries. There are also large quantities of wheat shipped to Europe from America and Eastern Asia (India). If the crops are poor, however, as is at present the case in Rumania and as they were in Russia last year and in America preceding years, those countries are unable to supply Europe's demand. In other words, production is then smaller than the "demand." Actual wants of course do not count, for as aforestated, the demand forms but a small part of actual wants.

And if even the so-called "higher classes" of society, who are financially better situated, are unable to procure their "daily bread," what becomes of the thousands upon thousands of famished proletaires who are not counted in the commercial computations, yet who form the largest part of the population? For them there is no salvation except in the imitation of the example set by the Russian peasants during the famine, unless indeed they prefer, like cowardly curs, to drop starving in the streets like the people in India have been doing for the last two years. J. HURVITZ.

Strada Mircea-Voda 28, Bucharest, Rumania.

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THE MOVEMENT IN FAVOR OF IGNORRANCE.

Whatever other claims to originality I may have, I believe it is undisputed that I discovered the existence of a Movement in Favor of Ignorance.

I made it known in the Truth Seeker about twenty years ago. My attention was first drawn to the Movement in Favor of Ignorance by some articles in the Christian Statesman, (organ of the late lamented Churchianity-in-the Constitution party) eulogistic on Brother Jasper, of "sun-do-move" celebrity. I perceived the God-in-the-Constitutionists were assisting Jasper, as much as they dared to propagate ignorance among the colored people, without openly endorsing his astronomy, which would not have been politic. I remember that not long before, some mysterious noises in a North Carolina mountain (actually caused by blasting at a distance) had given rise to a local panic about earthquakes and volcanic action which produced an immense revival, greatly to the delight of the pious. I learned nearly at the same time that school attendance in great cities was falling off, for want of capacity, much to the gratification of millionaires. I heard Carnegie and other plunderers announce that education, above a certain point, was incompatible with "business success"—as probably it is; but they had "some moral in this Benedictus." Of course I was familiar with Comstock's crusade against physiology, art, and Biblical criticism. Also with Matt Carpenter's press-gag law; and the series of postal regulation acts, advancing since 1873 for the manifest purpose of making popular instruction more difficult. Putting all these twos and twos together, with some others presentlo to be mentioned, I drew the following conclusions:

1. A Movement in Favor of Ignorance exists.

2. Its strongholds, I need not say, are in the churches; but the millionaire thieves are promoting it with characteristic prescience for the side on which their bread is buttered.

3. It is, of course, a secret movement. Its promoters know better than to tell an average American that they are cultivating ignorance for Christ's sake, and want him to assist. They tell him that humanity, or devotion, or morality, or something else has a common interest with ignorance at a certain point, and are well content when they gain his assistance for the cause of ignorance so far. Thus, the Movement in Favor of Ignorance is a polypus—a sort of devil-fish,—whose tentacles extend far into the vitals of radicalism and infidelity themselves, though its head, of course, is in the Vatican.

As the original discoverer of the Movement in Favor of Ignorance, I have naturally watched with interest the progress of its many phases.

During the last few weeks the Movement in Favor of Ignorance has received several very satisfactory black eyes. (Excuse my mixed metaphors. They seem appropriate to a delineation of this "shape which shape has none.") In Paris—think of it! Paris!—an editor was indicted for obscenity, because he published a carricature which represented Oom Paul in the act of spanking Queen Victoria. Decision—"the satire, though very coarse, was not obscene within the meaning of the law." In New York, the Movement in Favor of Ignorance indicted Olga Nethersole and others for producing an "obscene" play—Sappho. Defendants acquitted, and Sappho magnificently advertized. Sing the doxology! The standard American papers, unaware that they are cutting their own throats, and headed by that particularly villainous organ of all evil, Puck, are demanding "more laws" for the suppression of "yellow journalism." It is as safe to say they will be disappointed that this may be regarded as a howl excited by another black eye.

But some other phases of the Movement in Favor of Ignorance have a less satisfactory record. Those are to be watched with peculiar jealousy which find any favor among persons inclined to liberalism. It is of these, therefore, that I wish to speak.

I am encouraged to offer my reflections by the challenge which concludes J. T. Small's article on Kate Austin's former paper about "Compulsory Vaccination." Of course, I am opposed to *compulsory* vaccination, as I am to compulsory everything else. But Mr. Small is not content with that. He challenges every M. D. to show that *vaccination* (not necessarily compulsory) is a good thing. Frank D. Blue, whose paper he refers to, demands in its columns that vaccination be *prohibited*. So surely as all knowledge is gained by experience, a proposal to prohibit anything is a phase of the Movement in Favor of Ignorance. I have, for some time past, read with much attention the anti-vaccination periodicals. They are (of course, as a physiologist can see) in close touch with the anti-vivisection papers, which publish a petition to have vivisection "totally abolished." Their methods betray their inspiration. Cardinal Manning was the chief author of anti-vivisection. But on grounds independent of that, I pronounce anti-vivisection and anti-vaccination phases of the Movement in Favor of Ignorance. When the Truth Seeker took them up, I wrote to that purpose for its columns. It showed how much of a Truth Seeker it was by not giving me a hearing.

It is true that I am not an M. D., and therefore not strictly within Mr. Small's challenge, But that should be a guarantee for my impartiality. As further proof, I will state that I consider almost everything about medicine entirely unsettled and empirical. I am strongly, Anarchistically, in favor of letting every Faith Healer, Mind Healer, Christian Scientist, Mesmeriser, Natural Bone Setter, Osteopathist, Indian Doctor, Herb Doctor, Seventh Son of a Seventh Son, etc., cure—or kill, those who want him to, in their own way. But, with that facility which suggests old-fashioned ideas of Nemesis, the prohibitors and abolishers have chosen their point for attack that very portion of the healing art which is least subject to criticism. Anatomy is an exact science, though physiology is not. Surgery, based on anatomy, is positive. There cannot be a quack surgeon. It is by vivisection that surgery acquired all its most useful methods. The circulation of the blood was discovered by vivisection, and could have been discovered in no other way. I have actually seen it impregnated by recent organs of the Movement in Favor of Ignorance—a phenomenon well worthy to rank with the Christian Statesman's praise of Brother Jasper. The use of anæsthetics was discovered by vivisection ("experiments on living animals"), and could have been discovered in no other way. The sincerity of any but a most ignorant man who talks about the cruelty of a practise which has abolished pain requires simply no comment at all. As to vaccination—it was the emperical beginning, or rather it was an improvement on innoculation, the true beginning, of the one branch of medicine which really is scientific. I need not say that I refer to bacteriology. The benefit conferred on mankind by bacteriology since Cardinal Manning and the Truth Seeker *(par nobile fratrum!)* began reviling vivisection, whence it sprang, are actually bewildering from their number and amount. The number of deaths from amputation has been reduced to one in fifty. The treatment of telanus has become positive. The treatment of scrofula has become positive. The horrors of suppuration have been banished from the sick room. "Diptheria, as a dangerous disease, exists no longer!" These are but some fruits of bacteriology, and some of the first fruits. Every step in this glorious series of victories over our ghastliest enemies has been made in the only way it could be—by experiments on those useless noxious animals for whose comfort the Movement in Favor of Ignorance has nothing better to propose than "destroying them without pain!" How successful the crusade in favor of ignorance, disease, and death may be, let England witness: where politicians, with the next election before their eyes, issue licenses for experinments upon animals, and the Hon. Stephen Coleridge writes in the Fortnightly to complain of their laxity!

Mr. Blue, or one of his contributors, lately directed attention to the article in the last Encyclopædia Britannica on vaccination. I read the article attentively, and found it as unlike an ordinary anti-vaccination tract as possible, being, in fact, a learned impartial statement, based on statistical evidence, of what vaccination cannot do to prevent smallpox, and also what it can; plus a history of the process. I pass over the process, for, though interesting, it does not affect the question of results; and the author's theory of vaccine, deduced from the record of early emperical operations, is, he candidly informs us, nothing but his theory, which most physiologists entirely reject. The dangers of vaccination, known when he wrote, were erysipelas, jaundice (only one recorded outbreak), eczema, (doubtful to commonness), ulceration, and syphilis. We now know that any inoculable disease, as tetanus, may *possibly* be caused by any scratch. But on coming to facts we learn *(1) it is very doubtful if syphilis be ever communicated with vaccine;* (2) the fatal erysipelatous cases traced to vaccination (compulsory, and under the worst sanitary precautions) have been only about 30 among 600 in all England; (3) ulceration is due to the use of *unatteuated* virus, an error inexuseable in our time. General vaccination, though compulsory (that is the worst kind) has been accompanied with an enormous decrease of *infant* mortality and a very considerable decrease of adult from smallpox. In 1847, the total number of deaths from smallpox in England were 4228, the deaths of children under five 3114. In 1884 the total deaths were 1731, those of children 503. Examination of Table III, Encyclopædia Britannica, will show that these figures are typical. In the epidemic year 1871, the deaths of children were scarcely a majority. They used to be a very large majority in the forties, which is full twenty years too late for inoculation to be blamed. The efficacy of vaccination and revaccination upon the death rate of those who have the smallpox after all, is conflicting; sometimes strongly favoring, sometimes opposing the theory that vaccination softens smallpox into varioloid; and usually complicated by a large number of doubtful cases.

This is probably the last, as well as the first, you will hear from me on the subject. At any rate, if it calls forth a reply, and that is like the usual anti-vaccination and anti-vivisection literature, I shall not notice it.

C. L. JAMES.

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AN INDIVIDUALIST ON TACTICS.

Hurrah for Abe Isaak, Jr. and his criticism of Addis and Holmes!

I have been carrying on a discussion on this side on my own hook with Denver comrades, and every one of them disagrees with me. Nearly all of them are exclusivists in the realm of love * and opportunists even to taking part in municipal elections. There is no place in the whole country where so-called Anarchists and free lovers need a thorough prodding so much as in Denver, even to Georgia Replogle, the most radical one of them, who, although she confesses that freedom demands that property in a lover should be abolished and says she would live and endure to see her lover love another, tries to condone jealousy on the grounds that it is organic or peculiar to the whole of the human race † regardless of the fact that freedom demands that no line be drawn even at the sex act between one's lover and another who may attract them. One bright comrade justified marriage by citing comrades W. and L. H. as a case in point. She wanted to know what would become of H.'s job with a rich company of Denver, if he were not legally married. Well, I had no means of knowing whether his employers kept him for his efficiency and superior ability in his line of work or for conforming to the conventional code in his relations with the opposite sex. But to speak for myself, I might have secured a position as a man-hunter in Cripple Creek and worn a star and carried a club to crack the heads of proletaires and Anarchists, if I could have prostituted the gray matter in my brain and wallowed in the filth of politics instead of washing people's dirty linen; but I will not join the church to try to reform it from the inside; nor will I serve as a constable, policeman or juror, or practice law. I am not compelled to; nor is Henry Cohen compelled to practice law ‡ or H. to work for a fanatic who takes cognizance of his sexual relations. I want to place myself on record as opposing such methods. No amount of sophistry would convince me that Anarchists have to barter their conscience or starve. Men of H.'s and C.'s ability are not obliged to do so in order to obtain bread. Benj. R. Tucker keeps Liberty afloat and hits straight from the shoulder, even if Holmes does belittingly call him "Ben" and Morton "the Pope of the individualistic Anarchists." Nor does he marry or practice law; he does work for wages, however, and is perfectly consistent in doing so.

I am with Emma Goldman, Susan Patton, Kate Austin, S. D., and Isaak in reference to Anarchists consorting with political thieves and legal harlots. I have hoed beans and eaten corn pie rather than act the hypocrite. I never served on a jury or paid a cent of poll-tax, and never shall do so.

As for Cohen he is little behind Tucker in intellect, but he will never succeed as a lawyer. I for my part should prefer a lawyer to defend me that stood in with the crowd of legal sharks to a proscribed man who preached one thing and practised another. I should never jeopardize my case by employing an Anarchist lawyer. Ingersoll declined to defend the Chicago Anarchist comrades because he knew he would prejudice their case, as is now well konwn.

My best friend in Colorado whom I converted to Anarchism, has consorted with thieves in the Colorado legislature and held other offices under the seal of the commonwealth of the centennial State, but he has the manhood to confess himself a prostitute and to confess shame at yielding to temptation, and he has paid dearly for disregarding my council to steer clear of matrimonial alliances. He would give half of his fortune now to call back those good old days when he was free to kiss Betsy Jane on old Grimes' cellar door, without fear of a hell-cat coming at him with a cleaver.

Why not all of us go back like the sow that was washed and wallow in the filth and slime of politics? Why not join the church and turn into an Anarchistet club or Sunday school? ‖

J. A. EVANS.

210 E. Warren Ave., Cripple Creek, Colo.

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* That means, no doubt, they are exclusivists so far as the practise of varietism of their legal slaves ("husbands" and "wives") is concerned, but are first rate varietists as to their own practises on the sly, eh?—

† Pray, isn't this a mistake? Didn't Georgia say "human *roosters*?"

‡ Comrade Evans evidently forgets that there are other factors in life outside of compulsion that are just as exacting, for instance—prestige.

‖ An Anarchistic Sunday school a la Stephen T. Byington?

THE PATCHER.

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"License" is a term invented by persons who desire to control the conduct of others. Webster defines it as an "excess of liberty." Absurd. There can be no excess of liberty. You might as well talk of of excess space. Liberty and freedom are necessarily unlimited. Any restraint destroys liberty. To tell me that I am free only to do right, to be just and true, means that I am free to do as you please, but not as I please, which isn't freedom at all. That is what Jehova told Adam and Eve: "You are free to eat of every tree but one." Had Adam and Eve obeyed, they would have remained a pair of babies; but they asserted their right to do what Jehovah said was wrong and thereby saved the world from the stagnation of paradise. If freedom doesn't mean freedom to do what people call wrong, it doesn't mean anything. If people are not free to do wrong, how are they to find out that it is wrong? I tell my child that I have discovered that fire burns. If he doubts my word, I tell him he is at liberty to put his hand in the fire and find out for himself.—Hugh O. Pentecost.

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For Chicago.

Decoration Day, picnic and meeting in the woods, north of Waldheim cemetery. Bring your lunch. Meeting called at 2 o'clock, important matters to be considered. Comrades Mrs. Parsons, Jay Fox and others will speak.

Comrades at the monument will direct you to the place.

For Western Penuylvania.

The first picnic of the season of the American, Italian, French and German comrades will take place on Decoration Day, May 30, on Comrade Meyer's farm, Lock No. 3, near Elizabeth, Pa. Trains leave the Lake Erie Depot direct to Lock No. 3 at 7.50 a. m. and 12.40 p. m.

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The number printed on the wrapper of your paper shows that your subscription has been paid up to that number.

ABOUT DELEGATES.

I would decidedly favor the opinion offered by H. Eugster: that Emma Goldman be sent all the material possible that is necessary for the presentation of conditions existing in different parts of the American labor world at the Paris congress.

Her own sufferings, her struggles, her triumphs, have come through no easy route, but by actual experience in the workshops and intellectual circles. She cannot be objected to as a foreigner to our conditions, even if foreign by birth. Her life is a part of the struggles for bread under a Declaration of Independence which guarantees on paper "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." I have heard people who had not studied the philosophy of Anarchism, but who had heard Emma lecture, say, "Why, she simply wants liberty, and that is what our Declaration guarantees, but our politicians are too corrupt."

Of course it would be fine to have a native American go as delegate, but I know of no native American in our ranks with the same qualifications of knowledge of workshop conditions, combined with sympathy and intellectual capability, and uncompromising devotion to principles, independent of personal prejudice of any kind, as E. Goldman.

Theorizing will not do, the student and doctrinaire will not do; we ought to have one who has been through the whole gamut of sorrow and the capacity to depict it; the capability to show the characteristical human creatures inside or outside the ranks; that Anarchism is not only the abolition of capitalism and its government as it is understood in the political sense, but is a plea for the abolition of parasitism of all kinds, because the human race is detoriating under present conditions and the finer qualities of mind and body are starving.

SUSAN PATTON.

LET US BE LOGICAL.

I simply contend that as long as we have lawyers, judges and juries, it were better they should be Anarchists.—Wm. Holmes.

Very well; but then why not change our tactics entirely, go into politics and elect Anafchist senators, congressmen, mayors, and so on? I suppose it will be less offensive to our sensitiveness to be imprisoned and hanged by our own comrades than by the officers of the enemy.

Is Kropotkin wrong when he urges the young lawyer (see "An Appeal to the Young") to drop his profession? "You will understand that to remain a servant of the written law is to place yourself every day in opposition to the law of conscience, and to make a bargain on the wrong side; and, since this struggle cannot go on forever, you will either silence your conscience and become a scoundrel, or you will break with tradition, and you will work with us for the utter destruction of all this injustice, economical, social, and political."

The question is very simple: Are we for or against authority? A man who assumes to judge others does not destroy but fosters authority.

"To be or not to be, that is the question!" F. PICCINELLI.

SPREAD OUR IDEAS.

It seems to me that of late some comrades have used the space of Free Society to hurl epithets at each other, and I believe its columns ought to be utilized to find the best methods of spreading our ideas, how to educate the people, and how we can make the workers see what Anarchism would do for them. The time is approaching very fast when the great mass of the working people will have either to starve or revolt, and it would therefore be advisable to discuss what we ought to do in case a revolution breaks out.

The people as a whole know little about Anarchism, and yet the economical conditions have reached a state in which people look for a speedy solution. Now, instead of discussing whether or not we can live consistently at present, let us rather look for means and ways which will enable us to spread the principles of Anarchism broadcast.

Who can be a consistent Anarchist at present anyway? Or who is going to draw the line and say this is consistent and this is not? If we want to be in the least honest and consistent in the struggle for existence, we pay dearly for it, and so to me the most urgent question is how to remove such environments in which we cannot be consistent. Let the individual decide for him or herelf what is right or wrong; let us join hands in our struggle for freedom, and when we have gained that, we will be enabled to be consistent. J. HEIMAN.

The Letter-Box.

C. C., Himrod, Ill.—Were the 50 cents for you or P.? Greetings.

N. J. J., Salt Lake City, Utah.—Thanks for new subscribers. If every reader would only gain one subscriber in a year, the so much desired revolution would soon be a fact. A bundle of papers were sent. I am sorry the error occurred, but it does not make much difference whether Morton spoke before the S. L. P. or S. D. P.

The Altruist, St. Louis, Mo.—We do not care to exchange with a paper that eulogizes the invasion of Cuba and the Philippine Islands, and constantly lies about Anarchists. If you wish to read Free Society, you must subscribe for it.

G. H. A., Home, Wash.—The capitalist also tells the wage slave that he lives in a free country and can "do as he sees fit;" but when the doings of the employee do not suit the employer, the sovereign worker and citizen is discharged. A radical in this city tells *his* wife that he "*allows* her the privilege to do just as she sees fit," only she cannot live in *his* house if her conduct does not suit him. This proves that Anarchy has often a great deal to do with "domestic arrangements."

S. P., Philadelphia.—I do not deserve the compliment. It is my son, 17 years old, who signs himself "Abe Isaak, Jr." We publish the contributions seriatim.

T. S., Tacoma.—Thanks. Was glad to hear it.

H. E., Seatonville, Ill.—Your letter was quite a surprise. Comrade Blanche Gaffe is now in Santa Barbara, Calif. Greetings.

O. B. E., Stapleton, N. Y.—Freedom has been ordered and will be sent from London direct. The paper has been mailed regularly to your address; it is perhaps the fault of your postoffice that you failed to receive it.

WHAT WE SEE.

That Representative Hunter has introduced a bill in the lower house of the Ohio general assembly making it a penal offense with 10 years in the penitentiary for any priest or parson in Ohio who has undue relations with any member of his flock. Now if some prude will introduce a bill to remove the squirels from State house yard because they twitch their hair tails when the ladies feed them peanuts, the farce of rump legislation will be complete.

That what the people of Ohio ought to do is to abolish the legislature for 10 years and then allow it to sit three months for the sole purpose of repealing laws.—Light of Truth.

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